

**REMARKS**

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The final office action dated May 5, 2004 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1, 5–7, 20, and 24 are hereby amended. Claims 22–23 and 27 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, claims 1–21, 24–26, and 28–35 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claim 22 is objected to as being a duplicate of claim 21; and claims 1–35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,790,638 to Bertacchi (hereinafter “Bertacchi”).

In response to the Examiner’s objection to claim 22, the Applicant has canceled claim 22 without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, the Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the objection.

The rejection of claims 1–21, and 24–35 is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Independent claims 1 is allowable over the Bertacchi in that the claim, as amended, recites a combination of elements including, for example, “sending an initial address message having a redirection counter set to a maximum allowed value at an origination switch.” Bertacchi does not teach at least this feature of the claimed invention. In contrast, Bertacchi teaches “a redirection information counter identifying the number of prior call transfers which have occurred in connection with the originally received call.” (Col. 2, lines 64–66). In

Bertacchi, the redirection counter is incremented to a maximum value after a number of call forwarding redirections equal to the maximum value. There is no teaching or suggestion of setting the redirection counter equal to the maximum value at an origination switch.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1, and claims 2–5, which depend from claim 1, are allowable over Bertacchi.

Independent claim 6 is allowable over the cited reference in that the claim, as amended, recites “sending a first initial address message having a redirection counter set to a maximum allowed value at an origination switch.” Bertacchi does not teach at least these features of the claimed invention for the same or similar reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 6, and claims 7 and 32–35, which depend from claim 6, are allowable over Bertacchi.

Independent claim 8 is allowable over Bertacchi in that the claim recites “preventing the call from being completed,” and “initiating fraud prevention activity.” Bertacchi fails to teach at least these features of the claimed invention. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner that Bertacchi teaches “initiating fraud prevention activity.” The section of Bertacchi that the Examiner cites (col. 2–3, lines 62–3) does not teach initiating fraud activity, but instead teaches “protect[ing] against endless looping transfers or excessive numbers of transfers.” Applicant respectfully asserts that the present invention is patentably distinct from at least this teaching in Bertacchi. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 8, and claims 9–13, which depend from claim 8, are allowable over Bertacchi.

Independent claim 14 is allowable over Bertacchi in that the claim recites “responsive to a determination that the call is a forwarded call, initiating fraud prevention activity in connection with processing the call.” Bertacchi does not teach at least these features of the

claimed invention for the same or similar reasons set forth above with respect to claim 8.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14, and claims 15–19, which depend from claim 14, are allowable over Bertacchi.

Independent claim 20 and 24 are allowable over Bertacchi in that the claim, as amended, recite certain features that are substantially similar to claim 1. Accordingly, claims 20 and 24, as well as claims 21, 25–26 and 28–31, which depend variously depend therefrom, are patentable over Bertacchi for at least those reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1–35 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If the Examiner deems that a telephone conversation would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (202) 496-7500.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911.

Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Dated: November 5, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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